

UPGRADE YOUR ENSEMBLE BY STRENGTHENING YOUR CLARINET SECTION

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BREATH SUPPORT

- Breath support is the key to having a great overall sound
 - Use a fast, laser beam air stream and a two count or more diaphragmatic breath, whenever possible
 - Have the student say the word “oh” while exhaling and inhaling
 - No restriction and total relaxation
- Long tone exercises will strengthen sound in all three registers
- Encourage straight back posture, as if a string were attached to your head pulling you to the ceiling, while standing or sitting in a chair
- *Breathing Gym* by Sam Pilafian and Patrick Sheridan is a great resource (CD/DVD/Book)

EMBOUCHURE

- Lower lip should be curved slightly over teeth
 - Too much bottom lip creates a sound that is bright and edgy
 - Too little bottom lip creates a dull sound
- Place a business card in the opening between the mouthpiece and the reed. Wherever it falls, mark the reed with a pencil. This is roughly how much mouthpiece the student should be taking (about 5/8 of an inch)
 - Too much mouthpiece results in a spread and unfocused sound (flat in pitch)
 - Too little mouthpiece causes the sound to be pinched and sharp in pitch
- Discourage biting of the mouthpiece (too much pressure from the teeth)
(some suggest biting to facilitate some notes not speaking-quick fix for bigger issue)
- Practice embouchure using a drinking straw
 - Keep head up and use a firm bottom lip and a firm, flat chin
 - Corners of the mouth should be down, in, and snug
 - Encourage the student to practice in front of a mirror
- Do not allow student to rest the bell of the clarinet on their leg, as this affects air, embouchure, tonguing, and pitch

- A mouthpiece patch can be used for comfort, to check placement of the embouchure and how much mouthpiece the student is taking, and to gauge if the student is biting.
- Mouthpiece/barrel combination should produce an F#; the mouthpiece alone should produce a Bb
 - Recommended mouthpiece: **Reserve Clarinet Mouthpiece | X5, X0**
 - Facilitates the proper development of sound fundamentals and promotes good tone production throughout range of the clarinet, as well as clear articulation. (Milled versus Molded- Less issue with cracking and warping)

TONGUE POSITION

- Three parts of the tongue
 - the tip, for articulation
 - the middle, for clarity of the sound and center of the tone
 - the back, which controls the register
- Use the syllable “ee” or “Shee” to capture the natural placement of the tongue and facilitate comfortable articulation
- Use the syllable “tee” for single tonguing at all note lengths
 - There should be no jaw movement when tonguing correctly
 - Maintain a flat chin at all times
 - The tip of the tongue only stops the reed from vibrating momentarily. Maintain a constant stream of air behind the tongue at **all times**
 - Air Attacks: extreme upper register and or extreme soft dynamic level
 - Straw
 - Why I choose not to use Dee tongue
- Quick barometer in tongue placement: have the student play C3 and trill to D3, using the second side key from the top
 - This will only speak when tongue is positioned correctly
 - **If the student is puffing their cheeks while tonguing, the corners are not firm (straw)**

HAND POSITION

- The clarinet should be held like a flute
 - Right hand should form a “C”
 - Right thumb should be under the thumb rest at base of thumb nail
 - Fingers should be close, curved, and relaxed
 - Use the pads of the fingers – not the tips
 - The fingers should never extend beyond the rings, in either direction
- Never let the student rest their right index finger under the side keys in order to support the instrument
 - Very common problem in young clarinetists
 - Slows not only the development of technique, but also prohibits the use of resonance fingerings and pitch shading

- Consider using a neck strap with students, only after they have been playing for some time, to help facilitate better right hand position.
- Angle of the clarinet from the body should be around 30°. Adjust accordingly from there, in or out, depending on sound, pitch, and facility of the altissimo register

REEDS | PLACEMENT AND CARE

- Tip of the reed to the tip of the mouthpiece
 - If the student uses a mouthpiece patch, be cautious that they are not using that as their reference point, as opposed to the mouthpiece tip
- Rotate reeds; use a different reed each time you play or practice.
- In order to extend reed life and prevent warping, encourage a break in procedure.
 - 5-7 days is a typical break-in period for a reed
 - In the first few days of use, reeds should only be played for very short increments
 - Label reeds with date started, or number them
 - Reeds will alter with change in temperature, humidity, and age
 - After use during break in period, lay each reed flat on Plexiglas and rub the vamp (top half) of the reed with thumb vigorously to seal the pores
 - Some students will use 600-grit sandpaper instead (wet or dry)
- Students should use a reed case for reed storage, not the plastic holders the reeds are packaged in
 - Recommended Reed Case: **Reed Vitalizer Multi-Instrument Reed Storage Case**
 - Holds eight of any size reeds
 - Each slot is numbered, which is great for rotation
 - Utilizes a two-way humidity control system to maintain a stable environment for reeds when not in use.
- Recommended Reed: **D'Addario Reserve or Reserve Classic**
 - Remarkably consistent, and flexible enough for both the concert and marching arenas
 - Available in half strengths with special 3.5+ and 4.0+ strengths
 - Allow you to move the student up in quarter strengths.

Recommended Strengths

Beginner: 2.5 to 3.0

Intermediate: 3.0 to 3.5

Advanced: 3.5+ and up

- If the reed strength is too high (hard), the sound will be fuzzy, airy, and the pitch sharp
- If the reed strength is too low (soft), the sound will be buzzy, spread, and the pitch flat. The upper register will also not respond well

For quick, subtle reed adjustments:

- If the reed is too soft, raise the reed on the mouthpiece and the ligature
- If the reed is too hard, lower the reed on the mouthpiece and the ligature

TUNING

- First, tune “Open G”
 - For adjustment, pull out or push in between the barrel and upper joint
- Next, tune “Third Space C”
 - For adjustment, pull out or push in between the upper and lower joints
- Tuning Rings/Barrels
- Tuner/Metronome Combination- many free downloads (Musicians Kit)
- Tuning Chart
- Venting/Dampening and Alternate Fingerings (Charts Attached)

LESSON PLAN | PRIVATE OR SECTION

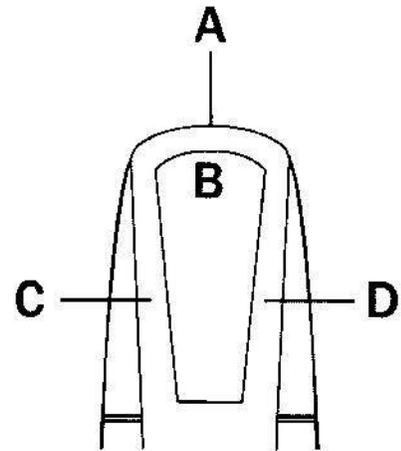
- Warm-Up
 - Long tones
 - Interval/Key exercises
 - Half Hole Exercises
 - Right hand down over break
 - Crossing the break
 - Tonguing Exercises
 - Section Warm-Ups
- Technique
 - Scales (Major and Minor) | 2 and 3 octaves
 - Chromatic Scale and Exercises
 - Thirds/Arpeggios (4 forms)
 - Minors (3 forms)
 - Tonguing Exercises
 - Opperman Left Hand Drills
 - Pinky Exercises
 - Nursery Rhymes (Altissimo Register)

MOUTHPIECE VOCABULARY

Tip-Rail – A

Baffle – B

Side-Rails – C & D



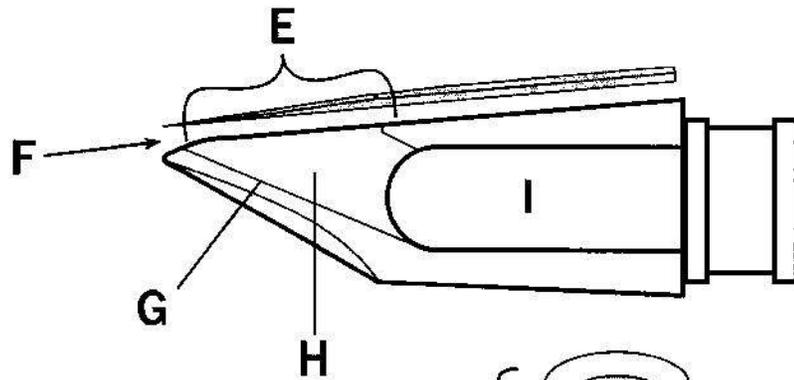
Facing – E

Tip Opening – F

Baffle – G

Chamber – H

Bore – I



Beak – J

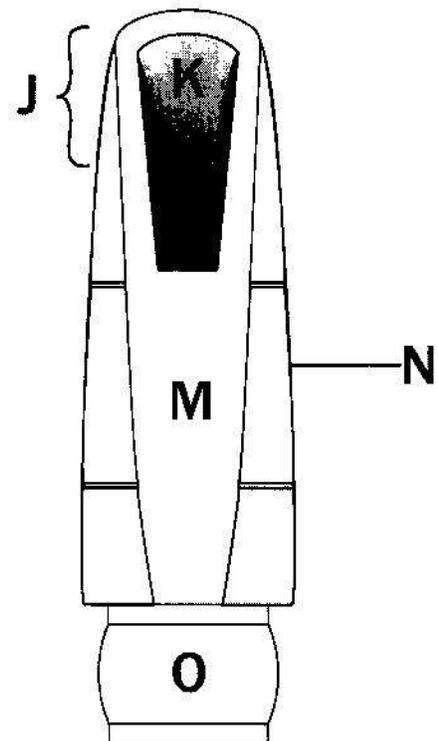
Window – K

Side Walls – L

Table – M

Body – N

Stem (Mouthpiece Joint) – O



Clarinet Problem Check List

What you hear/see:

What to suggest to the student:

Outer Embouchure (lips, teeth, chin):

Cheeks are puffed out
Emb. moves while tonguing
Emb. corner air leaks

Tone is bright
Tone is dull
Tone is tight/small/sharp
Tone is spread/unfocussed/flat

Make dimples, have lips hug the teeth, no air detours
Take fast note tonguing feeling & slow it down
Think of the lips as a double rubber band, circle the mp, hold sides of reed, inverted whistle
Stronger reed, more bottom lip over teeth, higher tongue
Lighter reed, less bottom lip over teeth, point chin
Open bite, relax embouchure, take in more mp
Firm up bite, take in less mp

Inner Embouchure (tongue, throat):

Motion in throat while tonguing

Register crossing squeaks

Altissimo register is edgy

Tone is spread/unfocussed
Tone is tight/small/sharp

Use syllable *THEE*, go back to legato, fix from the end of the note
Throat is too open, tongue has dropped; suggest cold air, letter E, nasal placement
Throat is too open, tongue has dropped; suggest cold air, letter E, nasal placement, put notes in front teeth, NOT back of mouth
Center of tongue too low; same fix as above
Closed throat (very rare); suggest warmer air

Articulation:

Tongue is slow
Tongue sounds heavy

Tone changes during articulation
High register tonguing is edgy
Anchor tonguing (not using tip)

Scoops in tongued notes

Relax tongue, stay closer to the reed, play legato
Tongue is jumping off the reed, use softer touch, stay closer to reed when off
Emb. has changed (relaxed), grip more firmly
Middle of tongue has dropped, use cold air
Can be slow and noisy (thuddy), but not always - re-orient if noticeable or a limitation
Emb. is moving sympathetically; use fast note feeling

Hand/Finger Position:

Knuckles behind nails are bent in

Fingers extend beyond tone holes
Index finger (RH) is under side Eb

Squeaks in crossing break (upwards)
Squeaks when changing fingerings
Left hand collapsed
Right hand collapsed

Very young players may have to collapse these knuckles just to cover the holes; change the hand shape when they are 13 - 15 years old
Re-orient thumb positions
This is created at beginner stage when the RH is not used early on; use neck strap
Cover holes, pay attention to R4 and L4
Arch fingers, don't bump into side keys
Do not align thumb with register key (place diagonally)
Thumb rest hits too far up the thumb and/or R2 is tucked under side Eb key (use neck strap)

Clarinet and Bass Clarinet

Long Tones

$\text{♩} = 60$
Long Tones #1

8

14

22

29

37

44 Long Tones #2

50

56

64

70



78



84 Long Tones #3



96



103



115



125



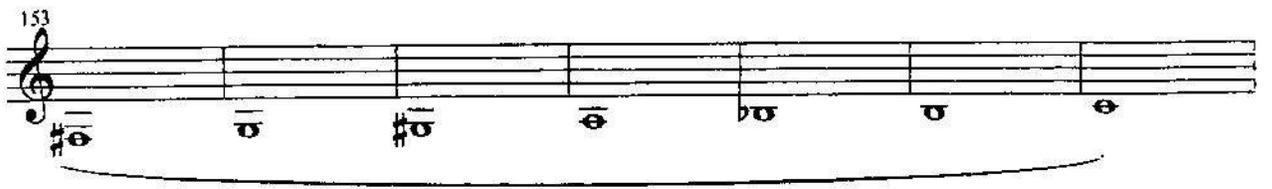
137



147 Long Tones #4



153



160



167



175



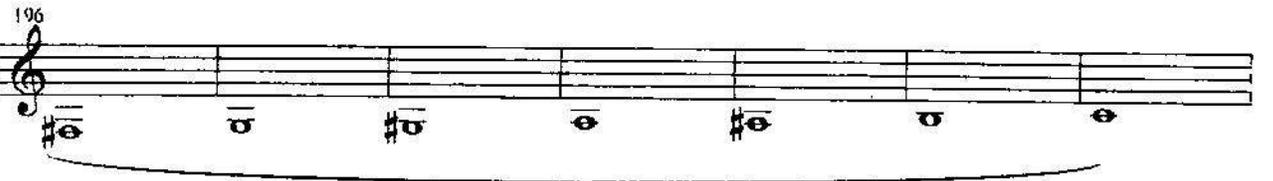
182



190 Long Tones #5



196



203



210



218



225



Long Tone Study

P.P.

1. Play with a clean, consistent tone using a solid breath of air.

Clarinet in B \flat

Musical staff for measures 1-8. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is common time (C). The notes are: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter). Each note is marked with a long tone symbol (two horizontal lines above the note head) and a slur underneath.

Musical staff for measures 9-18. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is common time (C). The notes are: F#4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), E4 (quarter). Each note is marked with a long tone symbol and a slur underneath.

2. Begin at softest possible volume; gradually increase to loudest possible then back down; maintain smooth, solid breath support through all.

Musical staff for measures 19-26. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is common time (C). The notes are: D4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter). Each note is marked with a long tone symbol and a slur underneath. Below the staff, diamond-shaped breath support symbols are placed under each note.

Musical staff for measures 27-36. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is common time (C). The notes are: C5 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), C5 (quarter). Each note is marked with a long tone symbol and a slur underneath. Below the staff, diamond-shaped breath support symbols are placed under each note.

3. Begin at highest possible volume; decrease to softest possible volume then back up; maintain solid breath support throughout all.

Musical staff for measures 37-44. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is common time (C). The notes are: D4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter). Each note is marked with a long tone symbol and a slur underneath. Below the staff, diamond-shaped breath support symbols are placed under each note.

Musical staff for measures 45-52. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is common time (C). The notes are: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter). Each note is marked with a long tone symbol and a slur underneath. Below the staff, diamond-shaped breath support symbols are placed under each note.

Tone Study #2

1. "Throat Tones"

These tones usually sound more 'stuffy' than other tones on the clarinet. Practice playing these with full air support, and work on developing a full, solid, rounded tone. On some clarinets, it may help to put the fingers of your right hand down on their keys to add some body and warmth to the tone.



2. Upper Register

Work toward a full, solid, rounded tone. This exercise is similar in nature to the lower-register tone study on the previous page. Repeat this exercise using the same dynamic markings as in steps #2 and 3 of that study.



3. Upper Register - high

These notes require a more focused embouchure and are very likely to have intonation problems. Practice them with a digital tuner and work toward getting a clear, consistent tone with good intonation.



Tone Study #3

Chromatic Tone Exercise:

Use a smooth, consistent airflow when moving from one note to the next. Take a breath where the rests indicate. Try not to let the quality of the tone change from one note to the next. This exercise is a good one to use for a warmup at the start of every practice session.

$\text{♩} = 84$

Musical staff 1: Treble clef, C major. Notes: C4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), F4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), C4 (quarter). There are rests after the 4th, 8th, and 12th notes.

7 *simile*

Musical staff 2: Treble clef, D minor. Notes: D4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), F4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter). There are rests after the 4th, 8th, and 12th notes.

13

Musical staff 3: Treble clef, E minor. Notes: E4 (quarter), F4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F4 (quarter), E4 (quarter). There are rests after the 4th, 8th, and 12th notes.

18

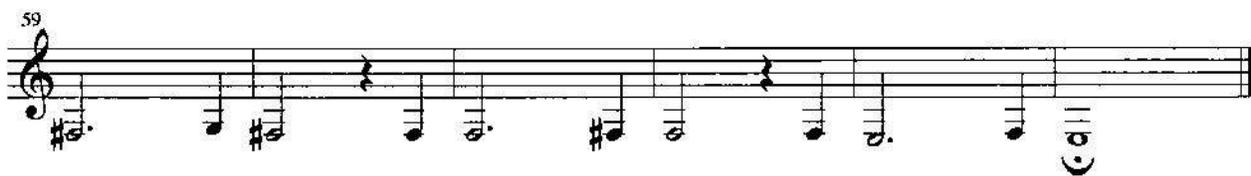
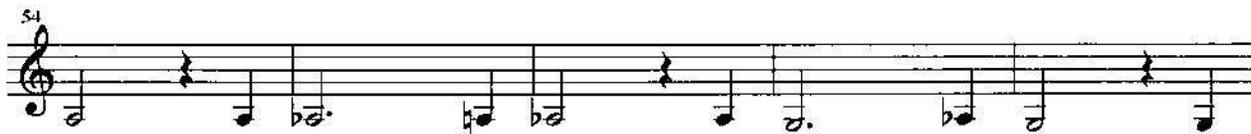
Musical staff 4: Treble clef, F minor. Notes: F4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F4 (quarter). There are rests after the 4th, 8th, and 12th notes.

24

Musical staff 5: Treble clef, G minor. Notes: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter). There are rests after the 4th, 8th, and 12th notes.

30

Musical staff 6: Treble clef, A minor. Notes: A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), C4 (quarter). There are rests after the 4th, 8th, and 12th notes.



Tone Study #4

1. Ascending 12ths: Play with full, smooth, connected tone. Try to change as little as possible about your embrochure and airsupport from one note to the next - if you find you need to use more air to get the upper note to speak, use more air for both notes.



2. Descending 12ths:



Tone Study #5

1. The Third Register - Ascending: Again, change as little as possible about your embrochure and airstream; try for a smooth transition between notes and do whatever it takes to get all three notes to sound solid and in tune. Use a solid, consistent stream of air; practice with a tuner to solve intonation problems.

The first exercise consists of two staves of music. The first staff contains six measures of music, starting with a treble clef and a common time signature. The notes are: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), Bb4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), D5 (quarter), and E5 (quarter). The notes are connected by a long slur. The second staff starts at measure 7 and contains six measures: F#4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), Ab4 (quarter), Bb4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), and D5 (quarter). The notes are also connected by a long slur. The final note, D5, has an asterisk (*) above it.

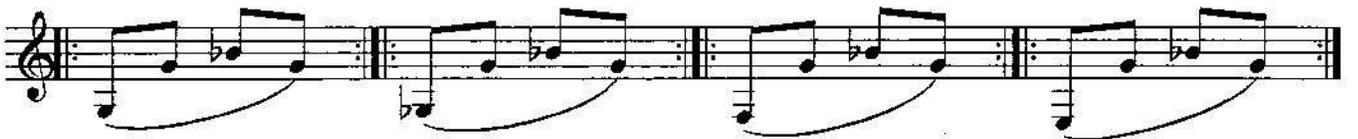
2. The Third Register - Descending:

The second exercise consists of two staves of music. The first staff starts at measure 16 and contains six measures: E5 (quarter), D5 (quarter), C5 (quarter), Bb4 (quarter), Ab4 (quarter), and G4 (quarter). The notes are connected by a long slur. The second staff starts at measure 22 and contains six measures: F#4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), Ab4 (quarter), Bb4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), and D5 (quarter). The notes are also connected by a long slur.

* The sequence may be continued to higher notes, but intonation and tone quality will become more and more difficult to control with each higher note. Consult a fingering chart for notes higher than High F.

Opperman Left Hand Drill

Repeat the first measure several times. Listen for smooth connections with no movement in the throat and embouchure. Keep fingers close to the clarinet. Practice with a metronome and listen for evenness in the eighth notes.



TONGUING EXERCISES

Beth A. Fabrizio

Clarinet

The image displays seven staves of musical notation for Clarinet, arranged vertically. Each staff begins with a treble clef and a common time signature (C). The exercises are as follows:

- Staff 1:** A sequence of eighth notes starting on G4, with a half rest on the first beat of each measure. The notes are G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F5, G5, A5, B5, C6, D6, E6, F6, G6, A6, B6, C7, D7, E7, F7, G7, A7, B7, C8, D8, E8, F8, G8, A8, B8, C9, D9, E9, F9, G9, A9, B9, C10, D10, E10, F10, G10, A10, B10, C11, D11, E11, F11, G11, A11, B11, C12, D12, E12, F12, G12, A12, B12, C13, D13, E13, F13, G13, A13, B13, C14, D14, E14, F14, G14, A14, B14, C15, D15, E15, F15, G15, A15, B15, C16, D16, E16, F16, G16, A16, B16, C17, D17, E17, F17, G17, A17, B17, C18, D18, E18, F18, G18, A18, B18, C19, D19, E19, F19, G19, A19, B19, C20, D20, E20, F20, G20, A20, B20, C21, D21, E21, F21, G21, A21, B21, C22, D22, E22, F22, G22, A22, B22, C23, D23, E23, F23, G23, A23, B23, C24, D24, E24, F24, G24, A24, B24, C25, D25, E25, F25, G25, A25, B25, C26, D26, E26, F26, G26, A26, B26, C27, D27, E27, F27, G27, A27, B27, C28, D28, E28, F28, G28, A28, B28, C29, D29, E29, F29, G29, A29, B29, C30, D30, E30, F30, G30, A30, B30, C31, D31, E31, F31, G31, A31, B31, C32, D32, E32, F32, G32, A32, B32, C33, D33, E33, F33, G33, A33, 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Ex 1:

Exercise 1 consists of three staves of music. Each staff begins with a treble clef and a common time signature (C). The first staff contains a sequence of notes: G4 (sharp), A4, B4, C5, D5 (sharp), and E5. The second staff contains: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, and E5. The third staff contains: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, and E5. Each staff is divided into three measures by repeat signs, with a 3/4 time signature indicated at the end of each measure.

Ex 2:

Exercise 2 consists of five staves of music. Each staff begins with a treble clef and a common time signature (C). The first staff contains: G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, and G5. The second staff contains: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, and E5. The third staff contains: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, and E5. The fourth staff contains: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, and E5. The fifth staff contains: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, and E5. Each staff is divided into three measures by repeat signs, with a 3/4 time signature indicated at the end of each measure.

Ex 3:

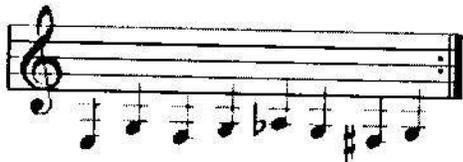
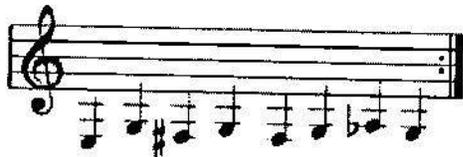
Exercise 3 consists of two staves of music. Each staff begins with a treble clef and a common time signature (C). The first staff contains: G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, and G5. The second staff contains: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, and E5. Each staff is divided into four measures by repeat signs, with a 3/4 time signature indicated at the end of each measure.

Pinky Exercises for Clarinet

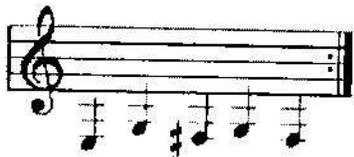
Developing accurate, independent motion of the little fingers of each hand is critical to achieving solid technique for notes in the middle of the staff and passages over the break. These pinky finger exercises will reveal any weaknesses and work on evenness and dexterity.

Each exercise is defined by the finger's pattern of motion. The pattern for each accompanies the notated version. Do as written, then reverse the direction, playing the exercise backwards. This will cover all patterns for each side.

Right Hand



Left Hand



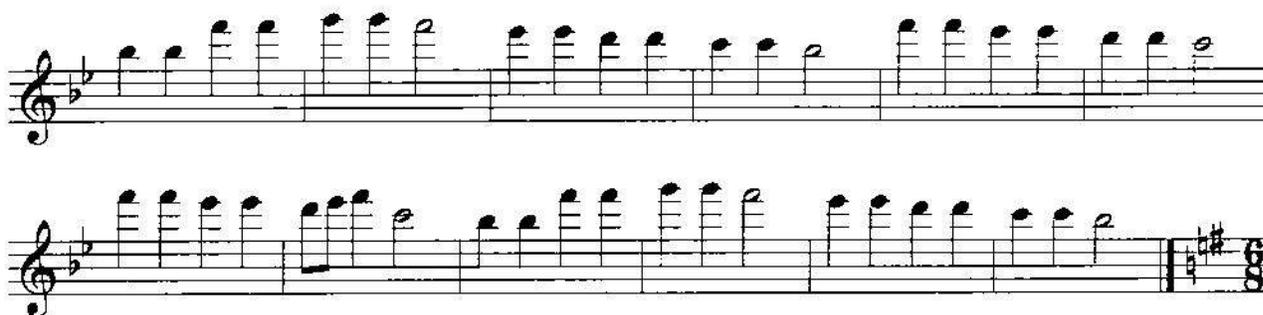
Upper Register - Songs

"Mary Had a Little Lamb"

Clarinet in B \flat



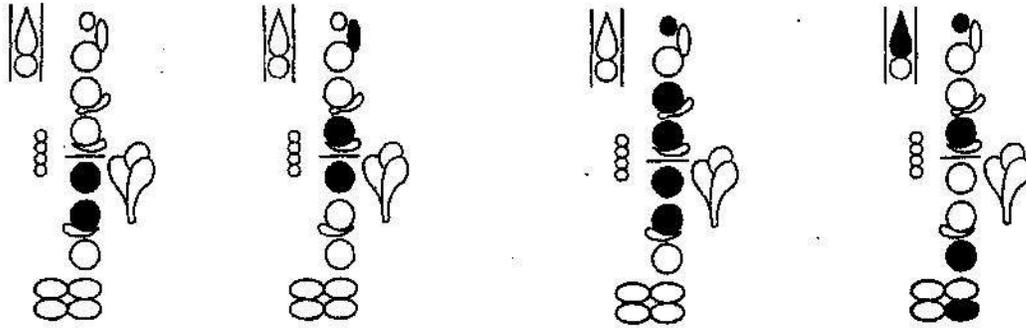
"Twinkle, Twinkle"



"Three Blind Mice"



Throat Tone Resonance Fingerings



Resonance fingerings for Bb Clarinet Throat Tones

- Help with centering sound of throat tones
- Aid in centering pitch of throat tones
- Having fingers down enable a smoother transition over the break
- Students can really blow into these notes rather than back away
- Different types of clarinets may require different fingering combinations

Open G	G#	A	Regular Bb	Side Bb

Helpful Altissimo Fingerings

- Depending on context, different fingerings can be used to aid in blend and intonation of the altissimo register
- Many method books only give limited options when most of these notes have a minimum of **15 fingering options!**
- Be sure students are using proper fundamentals/air support and **NOT** biting to play in the altissimo register

Long F-natural	F	F	
F#	F#	F#	F# (if going to G)
G (overblown B)	G	G	G (in G Major Scale)

BREATHING & AIR SUPPORT

Proper breathing and good air support are absolutely essential to all clarinet and saxophone playing.

BREATHING

In addition to being the foundation of a beautiful, focused tone, good air support also improves legato, articulation, and range.

- ◉ If done correctly, a good breath should cause the stomach to expand first, rather than the chest or shoulders. A good breath should fill the lungs from bottom to top, similar to how one would pour a glass of water.
- ◉ Posture is extremely important when breathing. To fully open up your chest, sit up straight with your shoulders back. Always breathe through your mouth.



EXERCISE #1

Place a hand on the stomach and take a deep breath. You should feel your hand move as the abdominal region expands. Also, try bending at the waist and breathing. If there is no abdominal expansion, the breath is likely too shallow or too high in the chest. Work for expansion in the entire abdominal region, including the sides and back.



- ◉ Listen carefully to the noise the breath makes. A proper breath should make a soft, relaxed, deep “ooo” sound on the inhale. If the sound of the breath is high, tight, or wheezy in any way, it may be an indication that the breath is happening too high in the chest, or that there is tension in the throat.



EXERCISE #2

Make the mouth tall and narrow. Bring the fingers of one hand together and tuck the thumb in. Place the hand in the center of mouth and breathe in. A good breath in this exercise will be fast, loud, and long. After the inhale, form an embouchure and blow on the palm of the hand for various counts. Practice inhaling and exhaling for 1, 2, 3, and 4 counts (♩ = 80).



AIR SUPPORT

Once you have the solid foundation of a good breath, playing with proper air support comes incredibly naturally. As with breathing, good air support comes from your stomach.

- ◉ Your abdominal muscles should remain constantly firm as you blow air through your instrument. To simulate this, take the instrument out of your mouth and yell something.



EXERCISE #3

Imagine your hands are cold and blow on them to warm them up. Now, imagine that you have a spoonful of hot soup that you need to cool down quickly. This exercise immediately shows the physical difference between “hot” and “cold” air.

- ◉ Remember that you need to get your air stream all the way **through** your instrument, not just **to** it. Imagine pushing your air through your instrument and out the bell as you play.

CLARINET EMOUCHURE

The embouchure (the way the lips are formed on the mouthpiece), in combination with a supported air column, is the foundation of a good sound.

First, practice making the embouchure away from the clarinet using a mirror. Then, practice keeping the embouchure completely steady while playing.

Follow these steps when building the embouchure:



LIPS

- 1 Roll the bottom lip over the bottom teeth and keep the lip firm.
 - Avoid taking too much bottom lip, which can result in a dull sound.
 - The top lip should stretch against the top teeth.



INCORRECT
Too much bottom lip



CHIN

- 2 The chin should be long and flat. To achieve the correct position, imagine there's a string attached to the bottom of your chin that's being pulled down toward the floor. You can also think of "pointing" your chin toward the floor.
 - Avoid bunching the chin, which makes the sound less focused.
- 3 Slide the mouthpiece in the mouth along the bottom lip while maintaining the firm bottom lip and long, flat chin.
- 4 Take a deep breath through parted lips.



CORNERS

- 5 Bring the corners of the mouth in toward the mouthpiece and make them firm. The lips should gently hug the mouthpiece.
 - Avoid "smiling" as you play (having the corners of your mouth turned upwards).

CHEEKS

- 6 Be careful not to puff the cheeks. Keep them flat and direct the air forward through the embouchure.
 - Keep the corners in and chin pointed at all times when playing.

TEACHER TIP

Practice building the embouchure on a drinking straw. Inhale through the straw as if you're drinking a thick milkshake and exhale through the straw while keeping the embouchure steady. Practice drinking water using a straw and thinking about the elements of the embouchure: bottom lip firm, chin pointed, and corners in. Be sure not to puff the cheeks.

TEACHER TIP

Students often don't take enough mouthpiece. Taking more mouthpiece is a quick remedy for a small, pinched sound. To determine how much mouthpiece a student should take, drop a piece of paper between the mouthpiece and the reed. The contact point where the paper naturally stops is where the bottom lip should be placed. Cut a mouthpiece patch in half or move it further down the mouthpiece as a tactile reminder of how much mouthpiece to take.

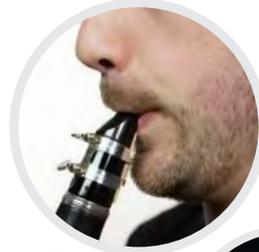
TEACHER TIP

Have students produce a sound only on the mouthpiece and barrel together. The proper embouchure and tongue position will produce a concert F#. Make sure the tone is centered and doesn't waver and the embouchure and tongue don't move.

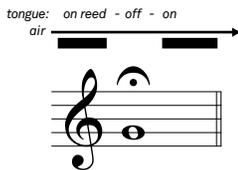
CLARINET ARTICULATION

ARTICULATION STEPS

- 1 Form the embouchure.
[Review the Embouchure sheet for more information]
- 2 Insert the mouthpiece by sliding it against the firm lower lip. 
- 3 Breathe with the lips parted while maintaining a firm bottom lip and pointed chin. [Review the Breathing/Air Support sheet for more information]
- 4 Place the top of the tip of the tongue lightly on the reed, just below the tip. 
- 5 Build up the air behind the reed (there will be no sound).
- 6 Release the tongue from the reed to start the sound, moving it quickly but keeping it close to the reed (use syllable “dee” or “tee”). Be sure to keep the corners in and chin pointed and firm at all times.
- 7 Place the tongue back on the reed after the duration of the note, but keep the air stream constant.



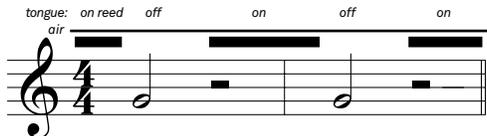
EXERCISE #1



Practice making an attack on an “open G.” The sound is produced by releasing the tongue from the reed.

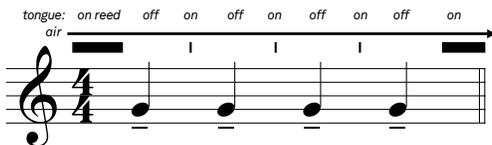
EXERCISE #2

Place the tongue back on the reed during the rests. Be sure the air pressure is constant at all times.



EXERCISE #3

In this example, the end of each quarter note essentially becomes the beginning of the next quarter note. “Flick” the tongue while keeping the air constant. Keep the tongue close to the reed and work for a smooth legato quality.



Basic Rules of Articulation:

- Keep the tongue close to the reed, relaxed, and light at all times.
- The back and middle of the tongue should be arched and relaxed. Use an “ee” vowel for ideal tongue position.
- Only the front portion of the tongue moves when articulating. The motion of the tongue is up and down, not back and forth.

CLARINET HAND & FINGER PLACEMENT

HAND & FINGER RULES

Fingers should be gently curved and relaxed at all times.

- Avoid collapsing the first joint of each finger, which should just be gently bent.



CORRECT

INCORRECT

- Avoid resting the right hand index finger underneath the side Eb/Bb key to support the instrument.
- A neck strap can be used to support the weight of the clarinet, if the student is struggling with holding the instrument.



Keep fingers close to the keys and tone holes when not in use.

- Fingers that are too far away from the keys inhibit good technique.
- When not in use, the pinkies should rest on the pinky keys. “Home base” for the right pinky is typically the F/C key and “home base” for the left pinky is typically the E/B key.
- Lift from the back knuckle, keeping each finger curved. Avoid straightening or lifting the fingers too far away from the clarinet. Be sure to not keep the fingers too close to the clarinet, which will cause flatness in pitch.



CORRECT

INCORRECT

Cover each tone hole completely, but keep finger pressure light.

- Use the pad part of the finger, not the tip.



Correct Hand Positions:



- Keep left hand thumb on a slight angle (30°).
- Left hand first finger should rest on the side G#/A♭ key.
- Left hand position should be gently angled.